

October 12 Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Panel Meeting Notes

Monroe County Loop Trail

Review TAP Grant Update – Brian said that \$1.5 million has been approved for the Loop Trail and that MDOT will pick up the remainder of the grant, but that the MDOT portion is not official yet. Mike said that discussions among MDOT were positive. Lucie said that Vince at MDOT is drawing up the documents now and she thanked Brian for his support. Mayor Clark was on the selection committee and said that discussion on the committee was positive and that he was looking forward to getting the work started. Dale said that we have been waiting to work on this project for a while.

Outstanding Issues – Lucie said that the TAP grant will only cover the construction costs and not the full project costs and that other funding sources will be needed. She said that money from private foundations is being explored and that work is being done to come up with a number for how much additional money will be needed. Brian asked if the Natural Resources Trust Fund is being explored. Lucie said that it is and that money from the Ralph Wilson Foundation is also being explored and that a pre-meeting will be held soon.

Dale asked how we could ask citizens to contribute money into an account. Lucie said that we could use the Community Foundation for this and that we can look into setting this up and that a 501-c-3 organization would be needed for this. Jim asked about using ARPA money. Lucie said that Mike Bosanac indicated that it might be possible, but that she is not aware of how it could be done. Florence said that she is not sure if this money can be used, but that the infrastructure money might be able to be. Mike said that federal transportation money can't be used to match TAP grants. Mayor Clark said that it is still being ironed out whether ARPA money is eligible.

Equity Planning Grant – Florence said that the submission deadline for this is November 1. Brian said that the full progress report is not due until November 15. He said that this group should let SEMCOG know the anticipated date of completion.

Signage Approval – Florence said that the subcommittee wanted more cornerstone branding on the proposed signs. She asked who would have final approval of the signs. Brian said that the Road Commission and MDOT will ensure that they meet the standards and mentioned that roads and trails have different standards. Alex said that some consistency between modes is important, though. Mike suggested reaching out to the Washtenaw County Visitors Bureau as they have done a similar project. Florence said that once we have final approval for this grant we need to determine the cost of funding this. She said that she would also like a timeline to be created and suggested creating a subcommittee. Al and Sue volunteered and Florence volunteered Mary.

Trail & Bicycle Plan – Lucie said that this has been completed and e-mailed to Mike Bosanac. She said that the County Board will look at it on October 19 and there will be a presentation. After that it will go to the Road Commission and then to the various municipal councils and boards around the County. She said that connecting local communities will be the emphasis of the presentations.

Trail Projects – Florence outlined the progress that the task force has made since its formation and showed a list of the Goals and Action Plan and a proposed project list and timeframe. She said that this list still needs to be synced up with funding sources.

Florence asked about TAP funding windows. Brian said that he would send a list of the upcoming deadlines. Lucie mentioned that the projects need to be refined first in order to ensure that they qualify for the various funding programs. Brian said that there is a list of funding sources in SEMCOG's regional bike/ped. plan. Florence said that this will eventually need a subcommittee.

SEMCOG Safety Program Update – Jenya Abramovich of SEMCOG outlined crash trends for the region in a presentation. Overall crashes have decreased but fatalities have increased, and this also characterizes trends in Monroe County. Serious injuries were slightly down in the County. Pedestrian and bicycle crashes in the county decreased but fatalities have increased.

Lucie asked if SEMCOG keeps track of the number of bicyclists on the road. Jenya said that it's difficult to do that because counts are not done throughout the region yet, but that the Strava app does show more trips. Brian says that there is an eventual goal to set up permanent counts. He said that he can show some of the data available so far for Monroe County at a future meeting. Florence brought up the rise in e-bike use among young people, and Alex mentioned the increased use of e-scooters.

Jenya also outlined SEMCOG's public education safety campaign. Florence said that Bill has made some signs that promote the 3-foot rule. She suggested that some money could be put in for bike/ped. safety funding for the County. SEMCOG said that they will share their materials for locals to use and adapt to their own local needs.

5-Year Plan - Mike said that this plan is available and that he can go through it at the next meeting. He said that the LaPlaisance Road bridge is going well and lane closures should end November 5. Florence said that the Monroe Charter Township supervisor mentioned in the local newspaper that they plan on extending the path next year.

City of Monroe – Mayor Clark said that the appointments to their Bike/Ped. committee have been confirmed by their City Council and that they will meet October 27. He said that there will be a volunteer from that committee who will eventually join this committee.

City of Luna Pier – Jim said that he has no updates. Florence said that there will be an upcoming MDOT meeting about the bridge construction.

Bedford Township – Al said that the Township has formed an ARPA committee that will look at bikes and trails, and that they will eventually contact SEMCOG for assistance.

There were no reports from the Village of Dundee or Berlin Charter Township.

Mayor Clark also mentioned that Andrea was involved on the TAP selection committee. Andrea said that we need to get the word out about all the things that there are to do in Monroe County.

Florence said that she is including the Trail & Bicycle Plan at the upcoming Pillar meeting, and that the BDC also wants the trail/bike plan to be presented at one of their meetings. Dale mentioned that there is a time capsule associated with Monroe County being the cornerstone of the State.